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ERS NEWSLETTER

A Bimonthly Newsletter for Economic Research Service Employees and Colleagues

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1990



Reid and Somwaru Receive USDA Superior Service Awards

At USDA's annual awards ceremony, Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter presented USDA Superior Service Awards to ERS political scientist Norman Reid and ERS operations research analyst Agapi Somwaru.

Reid's award was for "critical contributions of substance and his leadership role on the Secretary's Rural Revitalization Task Force" [see *ERS Newsletter*, Vol. 7, No. 5, Oct./Nov. 1989, p. 2].

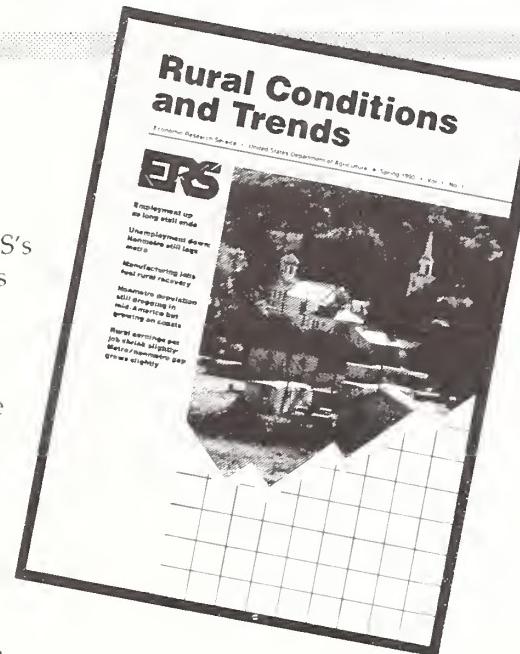
Somwaru's award was for "demonstrated initiative, creativity, and excellence in leading the econometric modeling activities of ERS, thereby enabling critical input to reach policymakers and the public."



Rural Conditions and Trends: New ERS Periodical

Rural Conditions and Trends, ERS's new quarterly periodical, presents information on economic, social, and demographic conditions in rural America. The first issue, released in June, discusses a wide range of subjects, including macroeconomic conditions, employment, unemployment, industrial structure, earnings, income, poverty, and population. Subsequent issues will provide quarterly information on employment, unemployment, and macroeconomic conditions.

Complimentary copies are available by calling 1-800-999-6779



or writing to the ERS Order Desk,
P.O. Box 1608, Rockville, MD
20849-1608.



Ballenger and Monaco Detailed to CEA

ERS economist Nicole Ballenger was recently named senior staff economist for agriculture and international trade, Council of Economic Advisers. During her one-year detail to the CEA, Ballenger will focus on agricultural and nonagricultural trade issues. She will also be involved in governmental analyses of issues associated with the farm bill and U.S. farm programs. Ballenger is the first woman ever named to this prestigious position.

ERS economist Ralph Monaco began a one-year detail to the CEA in June as senior staff economist. While at the CEA, Monaco will be the primary staff person for the macroeconomic situation and outlook and work on macroeconomic policy issues.

Since joining ERS in 1984, Ballenger has played a lead role in

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ERS's analysis of foreign producer and consumer subsidies and in analysis of trade liberalization issues. During the past year, she has been working on trade policy research at the National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy, Resources for the Future. Prior to joining ERS, Ballenger worked with the University of California's Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies.

Monaco joined ERS in 1985. He has experience both with the University of Maryland's INFORUM interindustry forecasting project and with the Central Intelligence Agency. Monaco received an ERS Administrator's Special Merit Award for his efforts to improve ERS's macroeconomic situation and outlook work. His emphasis on developing the economic outlook from a consistent set of models has improved the quality of ERS's macroeconomic forecasts.

ERS Hosts Soviet Visitors

Andrei Revenko (Ukrainian Institute of Economics), Vladimir Kudrov (Institute for the USA and Canada), Vladimir Tikhonov (Interregional Group of the Congress of Peoples Deputies and U.S.S.R. Union of Joint Cooperatives), and Mikhail Gelanovsky (Institute for International Economics and International Relations) recently visited ERS.

Revenko and Kudrov were here to discuss problems of comparing U.S. and U.S.S.R. agricultural statistics. Tikhonov was in the United States to testify before the Joint Economic Committee on recent economic developments in the Soviet Union. Gelanovsky was here to study U.S. macroeconomic policy and construction of price indices.

Grain Quality To Be Studied

Grain quality is an important item on the U.S. Congress's legislative agenda during 1990. Title XVIII of the 1990 farm bill that is being debated by the U.S. Senate is titled "Grain Quality Incentives Act of 1990." The bill states that "the Secretary of Agriculture shall estimate the economic impact, including the benefits and costs and the distribution of the benefits and costs, prior to making any major changes necessary to carry out the amendment made by sections 1822, 1824, and 1825." Section 1822 focuses on improving the cleanliness of grain, section 1824 on grade determining factors related to physical soundness and purity, and section 1825 on prohibition on contamination.

The Senate bill clearly indicates the need for measuring benefits and costs associated with cleaning U.S. grains before the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) can make major changes in the U.S. standards for grain or change the grade limits on grains exported from the United States. The goal of policymakers is to enhance the competitiveness of U.S. grains in world markets relative to other grain-exporting nations.

Anticipating that the grain quality title will be a part of the 1990 farm bill enacted into law, FGIS has entered into a cooperative research agreement with ERS to conduct a study of the costs and benefits of cleaning grain. The 3-year project will attempt to quantify and measure the costs and benefits of cleaning grain and their distribution among participants in the grain production-marketing-distribution system for grains exported from the United States. The interdisciplinary study requires the expertise of researchers at selected State experiment stations. ERS economist Mack Leath (786-1840) is coordinating the study.

RTD Is Realigned

ERS's Resources and Technology Division has added one branch and seven sections to more adequately reflect new and emerging priorities, achieve more efficient management of its responsibilities, and allow section leaders the opportunity to be more involved with research.

The realignment increases RTD's emphasis on economic research, analysis, and USDA program support in the areas of water quality and global change. Through the establishment of a new Resources Indicators Branch, the realignment provides a more efficient means for coordinating and implementing multipurpose data collection plans, a need consistent with RTD's increased responsibility for water quality, food safety, and pesticide assessment data.

The new RTD structure is designed to provide flexible administrative units and a better balance in the size of management units across the division. Responsibility for technology work is also more broadly shared in the

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Editors:

Verla Rape and Lindsay Mann

Layout and Design:

James Morrison

Publication Assistant:

Gina Hart

Photos (unless credited):

Carolyn Riley

Division Representatives:

William Anderson,

Arthur Dommen, William Edmondson,

Charles Hallahan, and

Jewell Tolliver

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Administrator's Letter—Building Excellence through Diversification of ERS Staff

If ERS is to be sensitive to the increasingly complex menu of issues facing the food and fiber system and rural America, we need a staff that is not only well educated, but one that brings a diversity of perspectives to ERS. USDA and ERS have been served well by several generations of agricultural economists whose farm

 USDA
backgrounds gave them special insights into the behavior and problems of farmers. Those experiences and insights are still useful for some of what we do, but new agricultural economists and rural sociologists with farm backgrounds are getting harder to find as the farm population declines.

Moreover, ERS now deals with macroeconomics, food safety, food distribution, environmental problems, immigrant labor, international trade, regional development, and a host of other economic areas where experiences and perspectives other than those that come with a farm background may be equally or more useful. A changing research agenda therefore changes the mix of staff we need. Emerging demographics are changing the mix of people in the domestic workforce. A moral imperative dictates that opportunities in ERS be open to all.

Excellence comes in all colors, races, genders, and physical conditions. The changing mix of people in the population is, however, nowhere close to being represented in the mix of ERS staff. For a variety of reasons, the growing numbers of women, Americans of African and Hispanic origins, Native Americans, and people with disabilities are not well represented in the pool of trained candidates from which ERS can readily hire.

ERS has made modest progress in increasing the number and proportion of women on the staff, especially in the "two-interval" series (mainly economists, sociologists, and computer-related series). The percentage of women in these series has grown from 13 percent in 1980 to 23 percent in 1990. Moreover, many of the women today have advanced degrees and are fully competitive with their male colleagues. Now a growing pool of female leadership talent exists, and more women are moving into mid-level and senior leadership positions in ERS. That will help us fulfill our commitment to further increase the representation of women in the ERS workforce in the 1990's.

Similarly, Americans of Asian origin (some of whom are women) are making significant contributions in ERS at the senior researcher level.

But relatively few African, Hispanic, and other minority Americans are among the men and women in ERS, especially in the higher grade series. This situation has not improved in recent years, despite good intentions. The pool of trained minority economists and other social scientists is small, and competition for those is keen.

If ERS is to increase the number of minorities on its staff, we must (1) compete more effectively for the few minorities who are in the pool of people qualified for jobs in ERS; (2) be more successful in keeping them in ERS; and (3) take actions that contribute to the enlargement of the pool of potential minority employees. None of these tasks will be easy. All will require creative and extraordinary effort on our part. All will also require real commitment and the best thinking of everyone in ERS.

As we work to develop plans and strategies for increasing the representation of minorities, women, and people with disabilities on the ERS staff, please share your ideas and suggestions with me and others who can communicate your ideas to ERS's leaders.

Strong commitment to the principles of equal opportunity and workforce diversity is the official policy of ERS. More important, it is morally right. Fortunately, we are backed by a USDA administration that is strongly supportive and committed to those same objectives. But policy and good intentions don't guarantee progress. Progress is possible and will come when each of us in ERS assumes personal accountability for taking actions that contribute to progress. We will succeed in this endeavor as we have succeeded in others, because excellence and successful response to the needs of the times are ERS traditions.



John
John Lee

new framework. For example, the Agricultural Research and Technology Assessment Section has been added to the new Resource Indicators Branch, the Alternative Production Systems Section and Agricultural Chemicals and Risk Assessment Section have been added to the Agricultural Inputs and Production Systems Branch, the Water Management and Technology Section has been added to the Water Branch, and the Technology Policy Section has been added to the Resource Policy Branch.

In addition to the new Global Resource Policy Section, the Resource Policy Branch has added the Environmental and Regulatory Policy Section. The Land and Capital Assets Branch has added the Resource Adjustments Section, which consolidates, to some extent, previous work from across RTD. The Resource Indicators Branch has a new section, Survey and Database Development, and a Geographic Information Systems and Long Range Projections Group.

Personnel Notes

Anderson Named RTD Assistant Director

William Anderson has been appointed assistant director for economics and communication, Resources and Technology Division. He has served in a number of staff and management positions since joining ERS in 1966, including acting assistant to the director of the Natural Resource Economics Division, 1977-79, acting chief of the Soil and Water Branch, 1987-88, acting chief of the Land Branch during 1979-81 and in 1987, and



economics and communication, Resources and Technology Division. He has served in a number of staff and management positions since

joining ERS in 1966, including acting assistant to the director of the Natural Resource Economics Division, 1977-79, acting chief of the Soil and Water Branch, 1987-88, acting chief of the Land Branch during 1979-81 and in 1987, and

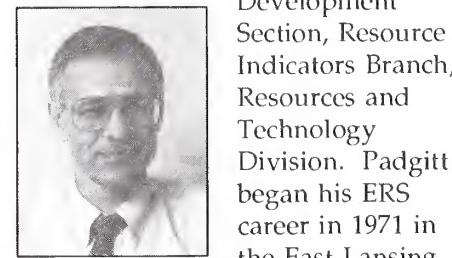
leader of the Land Use Section 1981-90.

Anderson's research interests are in law and economics, and most of his research career has been with the Land Branch in RTD focusing on institutional aspects of land use and land use policy. He has been a member of regional research projects NE-150 and NE-170 dealing with land use policy in the Northeast.

Anderson has a B.S. in animal husbandry and an M.S. in agricultural economics from Virginia Tech, an LL.B. from Washington and Lee University, and an LL.M. in natural resource law from George Washington University. He received a USDA Certificate of Merit for legal-economic research and staff analyses and an ERS Administrator's Special Merit Award for contributions to the Conservation Program Evaluation Group.

Padgitt Named Section Leader in RTD

Merritt Padgitt has been selected as leader, Surveys and Database



Development Section, Resource Indicators Branch, Resources and Technology Division. Padgitt began his ERS career in 1971 in the East Lansing, Michigan, field office conducting economic evaluations of water resource development projects and river basin studies. In 1981, he joined the National Agricultural Statistics Service, where he represented USDA on a research and modeling team using aerospace remote sensing to develop agricultural and resource inventories.

In 1986, Padgitt returned to ERS's Resource Policy Branch, where he has conducted research on conservation policies and

participation in Federal farm programs and coordinated data acquisition activities. He has been the coordinator for *Agricultural Resources: Cropland, Water, and Conservation Situation and Outlook Report*, which received the ERS Administrator's Excellence Award.

Padgitt has a B.S. from Iowa State University, an M.S. from the University of Missouri, and a Ph.D. in resource economics from Michigan State University.

Hrubovcak is New Section Leader in RTD

James Hrubovcak is the new leader, Resource Adjustments Section, Land and Capital Assets Branch, Resources and Technology Division. The section is responsible for analyzing the effects of the

interaction between domestic policies and regional resource availability on the use and value of agricultural resources.

Since joining ERS in 1980, Hrubovcak has worked on Federal income tax issues, agricultural investment, ethanol, and the impacts of commodity programs on agricultural resource use. His work has been published in the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *Applied Economics*, the *Journal of Business and Economic Statistics*, and the *Journal of International Forecasting*.

Hrubovcak has a B.S. in environmental resource management, a B.A. in economics, and an M.A. in economics from Pennsylvania State University. He has completed all the requirements except the dissertation toward a Ph.D. in economics from George Washington University.

Hrubovcak was a corecipient of the American Agricultural Economics Association's Quality of Research Discovery Award. He has

received a USDA Superior Service Award, an ERS Administrator's Special Merit Award for excellence in research, and an ERS Excellence Award for research.

Heimlich is New RTD Section Leader

Ralph Heimlich is the new leader, Resource Use and Capital Investment Section, Land and Capital Assets Branch, Resources and Technology Division. The section is responsible for land use related

to agriculture and investments in land improvements and farm machinery and equipment.

Heimlich joined ERS as a part-time research assistant at the Broomall, Pennsylvania, field office in 1977 while finishing graduate studies and became a full-time employee in 1979. He worked on the economics of soil erosion and water quality improvement for cooperative river basin studies in North Carolina, Virginia, Vermont, New York, and New Jersey. After a tour of duty at Cornell University, Heimlich joined the Land Branch in 1984. He has studied highly erodible cropland, wetlands, urbanization, and grazing lands issues and contributed to conservation policy research on the 1985 and 1990 farm legislation.

Heimlich has a B.A. in economics from Stanford University and an M.A. in regional science and a Master of City Planning degree from the University of Pennsylvania. His recent publications deal with agricultural adaption to urbanization and agriculture's likely role in wetlands policy.

Heimlich has received five ERS Administrator's Special Merit Awards for characterizing highly erodible land, communicating wetlands policy changes to



nontraditional audiences, contributing to ERS's consistency study, conservation program evaluation, and situation and outlook effort.

Seaborg Retires

Donald Seaborg, who was deputy director for situation and outlook in ERS's Commodity Economics Division, retired April 30 after 31 years of service. His tenure overlapped nine secretaries of agriculture, beginning with Ezra Taft Benson.

Seaborg devoted his entire career to situation and outlook work in ERS, beginning as a livestock analyst, and quickly gaining recognition in Government and the livestock industry. He eventually broadened his role from coordination of domestic crop outlook to coordination of the entire ERS outlook program.

Seaborg received USDA's Distinguished Service Award, the Department's highest honor, for his efforts during the drought of 1988 and numerous ERS awards throughout his career.

Peterson Recognized as "Points of Light" Volunteer

As part of the Presidential "Points of Light" Initiative, ERS economist Neal Peterson has been recognized by Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter for volunteer service to persons living with AIDS.

Highlights of Staff Activities

Agriculture and Rural Economy Division

Ron Durst participated in a National Extension Advisory Committee meeting on farm income tax, in Washington, D.C. • Thomas Hady participated in a Brookings Institution conference, "Setting National Priorities," in Washington, D.C. • Anicca Jansen managed the ERS exhibit at a National Governors' Association conference, "Building Information Partnerships," in Anchorage, Alaska. • Lorin Kusmin participated in a Population Reference Bureau seminar, "Tectonics of World Population in the 21st Century: Health, Economic, and Environmental Implications," in Washington, D.C. • Richard Reeder and Kenneth Robinson spoke on the feasibility of designating tourism development zones within proposed Federal rural enterprise zones as a means of encouraging rural development at a U.S. Department of Commerce, Travel and Tourism Administration meeting, in Washington, D.C. • and Norman Reid and Thomas Rowley participated in a Commission on Agricultural and Rural Development Policy meeting on the problems of depopulation and single-sector dependence in the Great Plains Region, in Lincoln, Neb.

Agriculture and Trade Analysis Division

Frederick Crook spoke on U.S.-China relations at an International Security Council Roundtable meeting in Washington, D.C. • Christian Foster contributed to a Cable News Network report on food supplies in Moscow • Foster

also spoke on the situation facing Moscow consumers/shoppers on Fox Television Network • Walter Gardiner, Steven Neff, and Richard Fallert (CED) participated in a roundtable discussion with a representative of the European Commission's Dairy Division sponsored by George Mason University's Center for European Community Studies, in Fairfax, Va. • Gardiner and Mary Madell spoke on the EC's Common Agricultural Policy to graduate students at George Mason University's Center for European Community Studies, in Fairfax, Va. • Carol Goodloe presented a paper, "U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement and Agriculture: One Year Later," at a Northwestern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association meeting in Truro, N.S. • Kenneth Gray and Yuri Markish spoke on the methodology and shortcomings of the Soviet statistical system at an American Enterprise Institute conference in Warrenton, Va. • Gray also participated in a National Council for Soviet and East European Research meeting in Washington, D.C. • Anwarul Hoque discussed economic indicators data with staff of the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris, France, and the University of Reading, U.K. • David Kelch participated in an EC-1992 task force meeting on the harmonization of standards, in Washington, D.C. • Kelch also participated in an EC-1992 Trade Policy Review Group meeting on agricultural issues centered on testing and certification and bST, in Washington, D.C. • Maurice Landes was a delegate to the Food and Agricultural Organization regional conference on Asia and the Pacific, in China • Landes was a cooperating scientist on the U.S.—India Fund Project to study factors affecting fertilizer use in India • Suchada Langley participated in a U.S. Dept. of State conference, "Sugar Markets in the 1990's," in

Washington, D.C. • Langley also participated in a Resources for the Future meeting to evaluate the goals and the market effects of state trading activities of Australia, Canada, the European Community, the United States, and the U.S.S.R. • Carl Mabbs-Zeno spoke on the conflicts and complementarity of human rights and structural adjustment in Africa at a Society for International Development meeting in Washington, D.C. • Mabbs-Zeno was interviewed by the Africa Bureau of Voice of America on the effects of policy reform in tropical product markets • Stephen Magiera spoke on the characteristics of decoupled internal support programs and cost estimates for decoupling options at a Pacific Economic Cooperation conference in Bangkok, Thailand • Stacey Rosen presented a paper, "Nature of Food Insecurity in Developing Countries," at an Association for the Study of Food and Society meeting in Philadelphia, Pa. • Kelley White participated in an economic committee meeting of the Great Plains Agricultural Council in Denver, Colo.

Commodity Economics Division

Lorna Aldrich chaired a session on international agriculture at a Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association meeting in Truro, N.S. • Robert Barry presented a paper, "U.S. Sugar Industry: Long-Term Changes in Supply and Demand and Program Prospects," at an International Sugarworkers conference in Gretna, La. • at an NE-165 conference on the Economics of Food Safety in Alexandria, Va., James Blaylock and David Smallwood spoke on food demand and its relationship to food safety issues; Smallwood and Tanya Roberts displayed a poster on food safety data needs; Roberts presented a paper, "Risk Assessment and Foodborne Disease

Costs"; Phillip Kaufman and Doris Newton displayed a poster on food safety assurance programs in the food retailing industry; and Daniel Putler and Betsy Frazao presented a paper, "Effects of Health and Nutrition Information on Changes in Fat Consumption" • Donald Blayney gave a seminar, "International Dairy Trade: Perspective on Issues and Challenges for the Future," at the University of Delaware • Richard Fallert, Howard McDowell, and James Miller spoke on issues that may arise in hearings on the operation of marketing orders at a Cornell University workshop on Federal milk marketing orders • Verner Grise was a participant in a panel on "Uruguay Round of Trade Negotiations" at a Tobacco Merchants Association meeting in New York, N.Y. • Charles Handy, Phillip Kaufman, and Lester Myers participated in an NE-165 regional research committee symposium, "Research Needs: Competitive Strategy Analysis, Market Performance, and Public Policy," in Alexandria, Va. • David Harvey spoke on the growth potential for aquacultural businesses at the Perdue School of Business in Salisbury, Md. • Richard Heifner presented a paper, "Does Routine Forward Pricing Effectively Reduce Farmers' Overall Risks?," and Theresa Sun presented a paper, "Dynamics of Supply, Demand and Price for Wheat Programs under Rational Expectations," at an NCR-134 conference in Chicago, Ill. • Roger Hoskin spoke on the outlook for U.S. and world soybean production and use at an Economists Roundtable in St. Louis, Mo. • William Lin spoke on implementation of the U.S. Grain Standards Act at a USDA Federal Grain Inspection Service advisory committee meeting in Washington, D.C. • Patrick O'Brien participated in a Users Advisory Board meeting in Peoria, Ill. • and Ralph Parlett was interviewed by Money Radio on the current food price situation

and expectations for the remainder of 1990.

Resources and Technology Division

Eldon Ball presented a paper, "Neoclassical Capital Measures Using Vintage Data: Application to Breeding Livestock" (coauthored with Michael Harper, U.S. Dept. of Commerce), at a National Bureau of Economic Research workshop on "Capital, Obsolescence, and Depreciation," in Cambridge, Mass. • David Ervin spoke on potential 1990 farm bill conservation and environmental provisions at a Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts' meeting, in Deep Creek Lake, Md. • Ervin also presented a paper, "European Agriculture and Environmental Policies: Sorting through Incentives" (coauthored with James Tobey), at an American Enterprise Institute Conference, "Is Environmental Quality Good for Business?" in Washington, D.C. • Dwight Gadsby presented seminars in Castelfranco, Venice, and Padova, Italy, on environmental regulations and their impacts on the structure of agriculture • Leroy Hansen presented a paper, "Private Sector Incentives for Investment in Seed Development" (coauthored with Mary Knudson), at a Western Economics Association International meeting in San Diego, Calif. • Ralph Heimlich presented a paper, "Agricultural Adaptation to Urbanization: Farm Types in Northeast Metropolitan Areas" (coauthored with Charles Barnard), at a meeting of the Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association in Truro, N.S. • Heimlich also participated in a meeting of the Northeast Regional Research Project (NE-170) on "Rural Land Policy in the Northeast," in Truro, N.S. • William Hyde participated in a Research Advisory Committee meeting of the Philippine Institute of Development Studies and gave a seminar on

stumpage pricing and rent collection by public resource management agencies at the University of the Philippines, in Manila. • John McClelland participated in a seminar, "Impact of New Technologies: Look at Porcine Somatotrophin (pST)," at the World Pork Expo in Des Moines, Iowa. • Craig Osteen participated in a meeting of government and industry representatives assessing the economic benefits of phorate and terbufos granular insecticides, in Las Vegas, Nev. • John Reilly was a member of the U.S. review team for a U.S.S.R.-led working group meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in Coolfont, W. Va. • Reilly also participated in a meeting of government and academic economists looking at priority economic research issues on global change under the auspices of the interdepartmental Committee on Earth and Environmental Sciences, in New Haven, Conn. • Parveen Setia participated in a meeting of representative economists for the Management Systems Evaluation Areas selected under USDA's Midwest Water Quality Initiative, in St. Louis, Mo. • Robbin Shoemaker spoke on the USDA water quality data collection effort at a Southern National Resource Economics Committee meeting in Orlando, Fla. • James Tobey spoke on "Opportunities for Environmental Sustainability in OECD Countries" at an International Society for Ecological Economics conference at the World Bank in Washington, D.C. • and Gene Wunderlich spoke on "Property Taxes as a Value of Public Interest in Agricultural Land" at a Robert Schalkenback Foundation seminar in New York, N.Y.

Coefficients Model" (coauthored by I. Lok Chang, American University), at a Society for Economic Dynamics and Control meeting in Minneapolis, Minn. • and Agapi Somwaru presented a paper, "Modeling Dynamic Resource Adjustment: Empirical Restrictions and an Application to U.S. Agriculture" (coauthored by Eldon Ball, RTD, and Uptal Vasavada, Université Laval, Qué.), at a Conference on Operations Research, in Athens, Greece.

Office of the Administrator

Milton Erickson met with the Western Region Experiment Station Directors in Newport, Oreg. • John Lee participated in an economics committee meeting of the Great Plains Agricultural Council in Denver, Colo. • Lee also met with the Northeast Regional Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors in Mystic, Conn. • Lee, Edward Reinsel, Kenneth Gray (ATAD), and Kelley White (ATAD) participated in an Office of Management and Budget meeting with representatives of the U.S.S.R.'s central statistical agency, in Washington, D.C. • Bob Robinson participated in a meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Committee on Agriculture, in Paris, France • and Robinson also participated in a USDA interagency research tour in Minnesota.

Data Services Center

Charles Hallahan presented a paper, "Imposing Stationarity Conditions on a Stochastic

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ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE, ROOM 1212
1301 NEW YORK AVENUE NORTHWEST
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